



LEARNING OBJECTIVES	IN THIS UNIT YOU WILL ...
Watch and listen	watch and understand a video about vocational training.
Reading skill	interpret graphical information.
Critical thinking	analyze information in graphs and other figures.
Grammar	use the active and passive voice to discuss figures.
Academic writing skill	make a claim.
Writing task	write an argumentative essay with graphical support.

UNLOCK YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.

- 1 What is happening in this picture? Have you experienced something similar? What was it like?
- 2 What kind of job do you have or hope to have?
- 3 How closely is, or was, your education connected to your professional goals?
- 4 What do you think is the main purpose of a university education?



WATCH AND LISTEN



PREPARING TO WATCH

- 1 Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.
 - 1 Are there vocational colleges / secondary schools for teenagers in your country? How might vocational training benefit school-leavers?
 - 2 What do most young people do after completing secondary school?
 - 3 What job opportunities exist for young people after secondary school?
 - 4 What industries do you think are in need of more workers?
- 2 You are going to watch a video about vocational training. Look at the photos and complete the table. Discuss your table with a partner.

	photo 1	photo 2	photo 3	photo 4
1 What job does this person have?				
2 What kind of training is needed for this job?				

GLOSSARY

not dig something (v phr, informal US) not enjoy something

second shift (n) working hours from approximately 4pm to midnight

welder (n) a person whose job is joining metal parts together

hydrogen (n) a chemical element that is the lightest gas, has no colour, taste, or smell, and combines with oxygen to form water

instrument technician (n) someone who works repairing, maintaining and adjusting industrial controlling and measuring systems

vo-tech education (US n phr) education in which students get vocational training (training for a specific career) and/or technical training (training using the tools, machinery, manual techniques, etc. involved in a particular field)

federal (adj) of, or connected with, the central government of some states, including in the USA

career path (n) the way that you progress in your work, either in one job or in a series of jobs

ACTIVATING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

PREDICTING CONTENT USING VISUALS

WHILE WATCHING

- 3** ▶ Watch the video. Circle the ideas you hear.
- 1 Nick had more than one job offer when he graduated from a career and technical high school.
 - 2 The need for technical workers is increasing.
 - 3 Air Products manufactures high tech equipment.
 - 4 John McGlade has to train the skilled workers he needs himself.
 - 5 Government support for vocational education is decreasing.
 - 6 Not many young people are interested in vocational education.
- 4** ▶ Watch the video again. Write details for each main idea.
- 1 Air Products has 7,500 workers, and not all are skilled.

 - 2 John McGlade's company often has positions available.

 - 3 Career and technical education has been cut, and more cuts may be on the way.

 - 4 Vocational schools train students to work in technical careers.

- 5** Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.
- 1 Do you think Nick likes his job? Why / Why not?
 - 2 Why do you think John McGlade is worried?
 - 3 Why do you think more skilled workers will be needed in the future?
 - 4 What do you think are some other jobs that students can train for at a career and technical high school?

DISCUSSION

- 6** Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.
- 1 Do you think entering into a career and technical high school is a good idea? Why / Why not?
 - 2 Would you have been interested in attending a career and technical high school? Why / Why not?
 - 3 What are the advantages of young people entering the workforce shortly after secondary school? Are there any disadvantages?

UNDERSTANDING
MAIN IDEAS

UNDERSTANDING
DETAIL

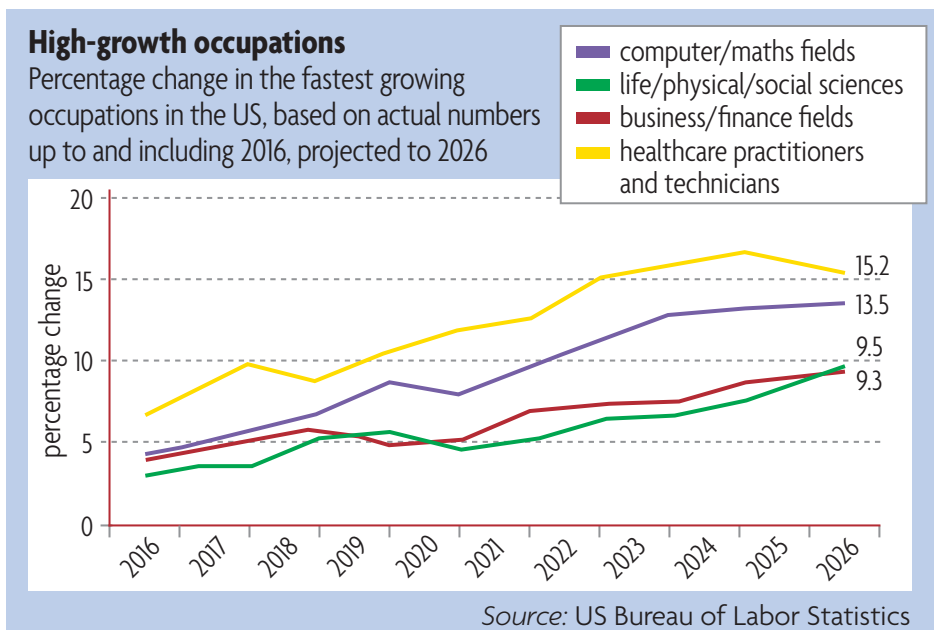
MAKING INFERENCES

Interpreting graphical information

Academic texts often include tables, graphs or other diagrams to support and extend the content of the text. In a good academic text the graphical information is always discussed and interpreted in the body of the text – graphs and diagrams are not just put in a text and not discussed.

As a first step to understanding information presented in graphical form, read the title, headings and the labels on the axes on any graphs. This will provide some context for the information presented there. If the axes of a graph are not labelled, try to work out what the labels would be.

- 1 You are going to read an article about the demand for workers with appropriate skills. Work with a partner. Look at the graph and discuss the questions below.



- 1 What kinds of jobs does each category include? Name some.
- 2 What sorts of skills and education are required for the jobs in these fields?
- 3 Why do you think these occupational areas are predicted to be the fastest growing in the near future?
- 4 What implications might this prediction have for school curriculum development?

- 2 Now look at Figures 1 and 2 in the article on pages 140–141 and answer the questions about each graph.
- 1 What does the horizontal axis (the x-axis) measure?
 - 2 What does the vertical axis (the y-axis) measure?
 - 3 What information does the whole graph express?
- 3 Based on the information in the graphs in the article, answer the questions.
- 1 Look at Figure 1. Why do you think companies are struggling to recruit employees?
 - 2 What problem does Figure 2 illustrate?
 - 3 How does the information in Figure 2 explain the problems that the employers in Figure 1 are experiencing?
- 4 Read the definitions. Use the correct forms of the words in bold to complete the sentences below.

assertive (adj) forceful; bold and confident

comprise (v) to have things or people as parts or members; to consist of

expertise (n) a high level of knowledge or skill

labour (n) workers, especially people who do practical work with their hands

mismatch (n) things that do not work well together

persistent (adj) (of a problem) lasting for a long time, difficult to resolve

pose (v) to cause

prospective (adj) wanted or expected to do a particular thing in the future

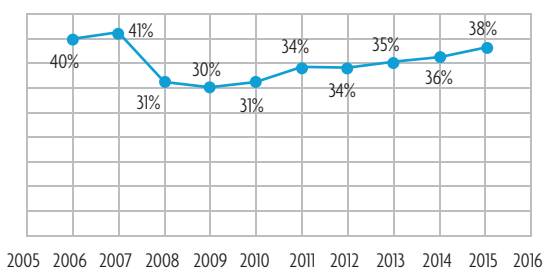
- 1 Professors at this technical institute are known for their _____ in robotics and high-tech electronics.
- 2 This situation _____ a real problem for our company because we can't find skilled applicants to fill our positions.
- 3 There is an unfortunate _____ between the organization's goals and its actions.
- 4 Experts are studying the youngest sector in the labour force, which _____ workers between the ages of 18 and 24.
- 5 You have to be more _____ if you want people to listen to your ideas.
- 6 Our _____ costs were way too high, so we moved our operation to Vietnam, where workers' salaries are lower.
- 7 The staff in the admissions office regularly meet with _____ students to answer their questions and give campus tours.
- 8 For the last five years, there has been a _____ shortage of job applicants with skills in a wide range of technical areas.

THE SKILLS GAP



- 1 All over the world, business leaders and government officials complain about the 'skills gap'. Businesses have plenty of job openings, but they cannot find enough qualified applicants to fill the positions because workers' skills do not match those needed by employers. Figure 1 shows the results of an annual survey of about 42,000 companies worldwide.
- 2 For the most part, the employees that employers in western countries are seeking fall into two categories. The first category includes professionals in STEM fields (Science/Technology/Engineering/Mathematics) that require advanced training and **expertise**, especially in Information Technology (IT). The second category is much larger, **comprising** workers in the 'skilled trades'. Workers in the skilled trades have expertise in, for example, manufacturing, computers, electronics and construction. There are simply not enough workers with training in these areas to meet the growing demand. These jobs require more than a secondary education (for example, a training course to develop the required skill), but often they do not require a university education. In the United States, almost half of the **labour** force works in these kinds of jobs.

Figure 1. Percentage of companies with difficulty filling positions



Source: Manpower (2014)

Causes of the skills gap

- 3 Why have we been unable to bridge this gap and prepare workers for the jobs of the future, or even the jobs of today? The answer lies in both the job market and the education system in many western countries. The job market is changing more quickly than ever before. Many of the jobs that companies need to fill today did not exist when current job applicants were in school, making it difficult for curriculums to keep up with the demands of the market. Nevertheless, numerous business leaders argue that schools are not doing enough to provide the technical training that many jobs demand. For example, only a quarter of all schools in the United States teach computer science. Most schools and universities continue to offer the same type of education that they have provided in the past. As a result, lots of students graduate with degrees that do not prepare them for the jobs that are available. Given this **mismatch** between the education system and the job market, several labour experts say we cannot and perhaps should not depend on traditional schooling to close the skills gap and should instead find alternative solutions.

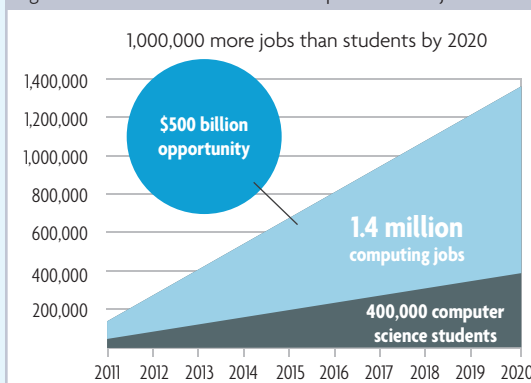
Closing the skills gap

- 4 Both industry and academic experts argue that businesses themselves need to take a more **assertive** role in the preparation of the labour force they require. Businesses have the best information about what skills their employees will need, so it makes sense for them to participate in training **prospective** employees. First, they need to communicate better with schools and universities about the skills they require. Second, they should establish relationships with future employees earlier, perhaps through partnership schemes that begin training future employees while they are still students. Finally, businesses may need to develop and provide their own in-house training.

5 Technical skills, particularly computer science skills, are in high demand, but developing these skills is not necessarily best accomplished by means of a traditional university education. There are a wide range of schools, courses and training schemes that have opened in response to the demand for computer science professionals, some in brick-and-mortar classrooms and others online – technical colleges for the digital age. The top computer science schools are expensive, but some boast a 99% placement rate for their graduates, many of whom find positions that pay \$100,000 a year or more. Figure 2 displays the predicted job growth in computing jobs.

6 The skills gap is both **persistent** and expensive. One business expert estimates that a company loses \$14,000 when a position remains open for three months. The skills gap is the result of many factors, and there is no single solution to the problems it **poses**. It is likely that a combination of approaches will be needed before the supply of qualified workers will be able to meet demand for them.

Figure 2. The current state of the computer science job market



Source: Code.org

WHILE READING

- 5 Read the article. Then match the main ideas (a–f) with each paragraph (1–6).
- Schools that provide training in IT can help fill the skills gap. _____
 - Employees in the skilled trades and with STEM training are in the greatest demand. _____
 - There is no single solution to the skills gap. _____
 - Current job applicants do not have the skills that employers are looking for. _____
 - Businesses need to participate more in preparing future employees. _____
 - Universities do not always offer an education with a clear career path. _____
- 6 Which of the statements in Exercise 5 expresses the main idea of the whole article? _____

READING FOR
MAIN IDEAS

READING FOR DETAIL

7 Read the article again. Write *T* (true), *F* (false) or *DNS* (does not say) next to the statements below. Then correct the false statements.

_____ 1 Globalization has led to labour shortages in some developing countries.

_____ 2 The most critical labour shortages are in IT fields.

_____ 3 The positions that companies are trying to fill all require a university education.

_____ 4 About 50% of workers in the United States are in the skilled trades.

_____ 5 School curriculums have adapted to meet the new demand for technical skills.

_____ 6 Businesses have the most accurate knowledge of the kinds of employees that are in demand.

_____ 7 More than 1,000 IT schools and training schemes have opened to meet demand.

_____ 8 An unfilled position that remains open for more than three months can cost a company more than \$10,000.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

8 Work with a partner. Answer the questions.

- 1 What is the purpose of this article?
 - a to persuade universities to change their courses
 - b to offer general information
 - c to warn employers
- 2 Where might you find an article like this?
 - a in a print or online magazine
 - b in a textbook
 - c in an academic journal

DISCUSSION

9 Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.

- 1 What do you think the \$500 billion opportunity is in Figure 2?
- 2 Who do you think should take action to improve this situation?

IDENTIFYING PURPOSE



READING 2

PREPARING TO READ

- 1 Work with a partner. You are going to read an article about the value of a university education. Look at the graphs on page 145. Then discuss the questions.
 - 1 Based on Figure 1, what generalization can you make about university education?
 - 2 Look at Figure 2. What does *median income* mean? Are university-educated workers more likely to earn above or below the median income?
 - 3 What do you think the topic of this article will be? What argument do you think it will make?
- 2 Read the sentences. Write the correct form of the words in bold next to their definitions below.
 - 1 There is a **chronic** shortage of skilled workers in the technology sector. It's been impossible to hire enough workers.
 - 2 Steve Jobs was a **founder** of Apple, Inc.
 - 3 Business leaders **dispute** the government's claim that the number of jobs has grown.
 - 4 The new training programme provides a good **illustration** of how the government and private sector can work together.
 - 5 There is some **ambiguity** in the law, so it is difficult to know whether the company actually did anything wrong.
 - 6 The Chief Technology Officer's responsibilities extend beyond IT; he plays **multiple** roles in the company.
 - 7 The company's Chief Executive Officer **asserts** that profits will exceed expectations in the coming year.
 - a _____ (v) to disagree with an idea, a fact, etc.
 - b _____ (n) the state of being unclear or having more than one possible meaning
 - c _____ (n) someone who establishes an organization
 - d _____ (adj) very many
 - e _____ (adj) lasting for a long time, especially something bad
 - f _____ (v) to say that something is certainly true
 - g _____ (n) an example that explains something

PREDICTING
CONTENT
USING VISUALS

UNDERSTANDING
KEY VOCABULARY



WHILE READING

READING FOR MAIN IDEAS

- 3 Read the article and check your ideas from Exercise 1.
- 4 Read the article. Write *T* (true), *F* (false) or *DNS* (does not say) next to the statements below. Then correct the false statements.
- _____ 1 A university education is worth the investment.

- _____ 2 Graduates in the US make twice as much as those with just secondary school qualifications.

- _____ 3 Graduates generally have healthier lifestyles than those without a degree.

- _____ 4 Graduates are more likely to vote than those without a degree.

- _____ 5 Arts graduates have higher incomes than graduates with an engineering degree.

- _____ 6 Arts graduates have some advantages over graduates with technical degrees.

5 Read the article again. Which of the statements in Exercise 4 expresses the main idea of the whole text? _____

6 Look at the graphs in the article and answer the questions.

Figure 1

- 1 Which country had the highest percentage of graduates in 2012?

- 2 Which country had the largest increase in the percentage of graduates between 2000 and 2012? _____
- 3 What percentage of the Mexican population (25–64) had a degree in 2012? _____

Figure 2

- 1 Which country had the highest percentage of graduates with incomes more than twice the median? _____
- 2 Which country had the highest number of graduates with incomes at the country median or below? _____
- 3 What percentage of graduates in Brazil earned more than twice the median income? _____

READING FOR DETAIL

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION?

1 A university education is a significant investment, so it makes sense to consider carefully whether it is worth the time and money. In good economic times and bad, and in spite of its rising cost, the answer is 'yes'. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), around the world the number of people getting a university education is rising steadily (see Figure 1).

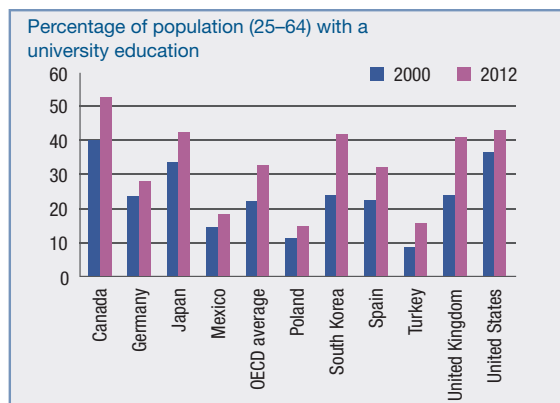


Figure 1

Source: OECD Indicators

The impact of a university education

2 A university education has a broad and positive impact. People with a degree are by far the most likely to enter and remain in the labour force. In OECD countries, average participation in the labour force for those without secondary school qualifications is about 55%. For those with secondary school qualifications, the figure is about 70%, and for graduates, it is about 83%. Graduates also earn more than those with only secondary school qualifications. In the United States, individuals leaving education with only secondary school qualifications earned on average \$28,000 per year in 2013, whereas those with a degree made about \$45,000. Over a lifetime, that difference adds up to about a million dollars. Figure 2 provides a dramatic illustration of the impact of a degree on income in selected OECD countries.

3 The consequences of getting – or not getting – a university education extend beyond income. There is a strong association between education and health. **Chronic** diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes, pose the greatest threats to public health in developed countries today. These diseases are caused, at least partly, by lifestyle choices, such as poor diet or smoking. In general, people with higher levels of education make healthier lifestyle choices and have greater access to high-quality healthcare.

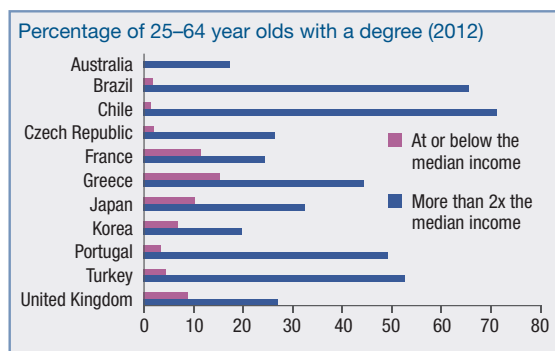


Figure 2

Source: OECD Indicators

Income variance between degrees

4 It is evident that a university degree provides an economic advantage, but not all degrees have the same earning power. Most analyses suggest that degrees in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) have the greatest potential impact on future income. In the United States, a graduate with, for example, a Chemical Engineering degree can expect to earn about \$70,000 annually, whereas a graduate with a Literature or Art degree may be lucky to get \$36,000 for an entry-level position. Marc Andreessen, the **founder** of the internet company Netscape, once declared that somebody who studies a non-technical field like literature will probably end up 'working in a shoe store'.

5 Yet, technical knowledge alone may not be sufficient for success. Steve Jobs, one of the founders of Apple, famously **asserted** that it was technology married with the arts '... that yields the results that make our hearts sing'. Other major employers in the technology field agree. Industry leaders say employees from arts backgrounds are good at managing **ambiguity**, unlike engineers, who tend to see situations in black and white. Arts graduates can see a problem from **multiple** perspectives.

It is interesting to note that the income disparity between arts and STEM graduates gradually diminishes as they continue in their careers. In fact, arts degrees are quite common among the world's most highly paid workers. About one-third of the directors of Fortune 500 companies¹ have an arts background.

Students, parents, politicians and industry leaders may argue over which are the most valuable degrees, but the value of a university degree in general cannot be **disputed**.

¹Fortune 500 companies (n) the businesses ranked by *Fortune* magazine as the 500 most profitable companies in the US for a particular year

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

- 7 Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.
- 1 What relationship, if any, exists among education, income and health?
 - 2 What do you think Steve Jobs meant by 'the results that make our hearts sing'?
 - 3 Based on the extract from the article below, what are some jobs that arts graduates would be good at? Why?

Industry leaders say employees from arts backgrounds are good at managing ambiguity, unlike engineers, who tend to see situations in black and white.

DISCUSSION

- 8 Work with a partner or in small groups. Use ideas from Reading 1 and Reading 2 to answer the following questions.
- 1 Do you think that future income should be the primary factor in deciding on a course of study? Why / Why not?
 - 2 Why do you think the impact of a university education on income is greater in some countries than in others?



LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

COMPOUND NOUNS

English, especially academic English, uses a large number of compound nouns as they are the most efficient way of expressing complex concepts concisely.

Compound nouns are formed of two or more words and can be formed with several different parts of speech. They also take different forms:

Single words: *healthcare, lifestyle, throwback, earthquake, homeowner*

Hyphenated words: *right-of-way, dry-cleaning, build-up, passer-by, well-being*

Separate words: *learning curve, world leader, drinking water, student identification number*

Noun + noun compounds are very common.

In the United States, almost half of the **labour force** works in these kinds of jobs.

There are a wide range of schools, courses and **training schemes**.

The top computer science schools are expensive, but some boast a 99% **placement rate** for their graduates.



- 1 Form noun + noun compound nouns with the words from the box to complete the sentences below. Use a dictionary to help you.

first noun	second noun
earning	balance
placement	market
entry	force
training	power
job	level
work–life	scheme
labour	rate

- The training centre offers a _____ _____ for people who hope to become airplane mechanics.
 - Statistics clearly demonstrate that a college degree increases lifetime _____ _____.
 - Our course has an excellent _____ _____. More than 90% of our graduates find a job within a month.
 - The _____ _____ has been very weak this year, as can be seen from the steady increase in unemployment.
 - The _____ _____ is defined as all the people in the population who are able to work.
 - Recent college graduates usually join a business at _____ _____, but some graduates with a STEM background are able to find more senior positions.
 - Salary is an important consideration in choosing a career, but a career that offers a good _____ _____ is just as important.
- 2 Rearrange the words to create complex noun phrases (a–e). Then use them correctly to complete the sentences (1–5).
- information / professional / technology _____
 - training / graduate / scheme _____
 - participation / rate / force / labour _____
 - university / trends / enrolment _____
 - household / income / median _____
- The 2013 _____ in Kuwait was \$40,854 per year.
 - A local car parts factory announced that it will be recruiting for its new _____ this summer.
 - If you want a secure future, you may want to consider a career as a(n) _____.
 - The _____ in Saudi Arabia reached 55% in 2016.
 - The Department of Education publishes a report on _____ every January.

CRITICAL THINKING

At the end of this unit, you will write an argumentative essay. Your essay should include some form of graphical support. Look at this unit's writing task in the box below.

Considering the job market in your country, what is a good choice for a career path with a secure future?

Analyzing information in graphs and other figures

Information in academic texts is often presented visually – in graphs or other types of figure. This information usually extends what is in the text or illustrates points that may be more difficult to understand in words. It is important to be able to connect this information with the information in the text, but, as with everything you read, you should process the information in graphs and figures critically. When describing a graph you don't need to discuss all the information – you just need to mention the most important data that supports your main point.

SKILLS



UNDERSTAND

- 1 Work with a partner. Read the information about the annual 100 Best Jobs report and look at the pie chart below. Complete the tasks.
 - 1 Explain why the author chose a pie chart to display this information.
 - 2 Explain the meaning of each section of the pie chart in your own words.

Every year, the news magazine *US News and World Report* publishes a report on the year's 100 best jobs. Figure 5 shows how the authors of the report measured job quality.

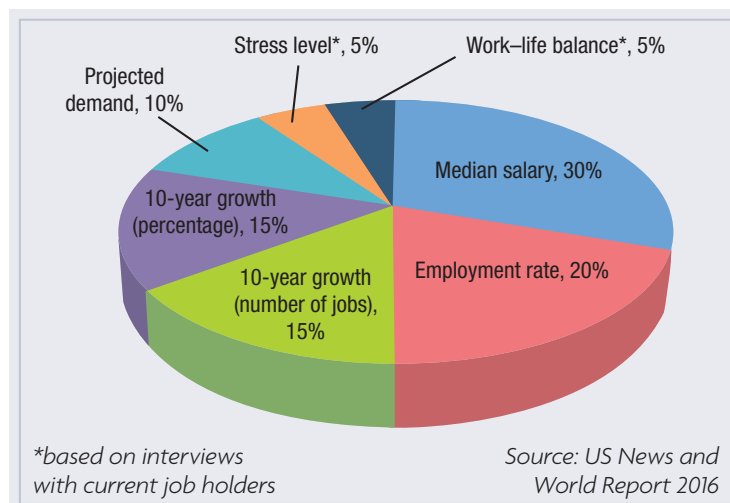


Figure 5. Components of Best Job measure



2 Work with a partner. Complete the tasks.

- 1 Look at Figure 1 below. Based on what you have learned in this unit, explain the wide range of median salaries for the jobs in the table. Which information surprises you most?
- 2 The highest ranked job is also the highest paid, but this relationship is not consistent throughout the list. Choose two examples and explain what other components in the measure could be responsible for the ranking.

Figure 1. The 100 best jobs in the US, with median salary

rank	job title	median salary in USD
2	dentist	150,000
13	software developer	96,000
22	nurse	67,000
24	accountant	66,000
36	pharmacist	121,000
38	mechanical engineer	83,000
49	medical secretary	32,000
66	laboratory technician	38,000
71	lawyer	71,000
73	social worker	52,000
81	high school teacher	56,000
84	insurance salesperson	48,000
91	manicurist	20,000
93	anthropologist	59,000

Source: US News and World Report 2016

3 You have read about the skills gap situation and the value of higher education, primarily as they apply to western countries. Investigate these issues in your own country or region focusing on the questions below. Keep a record of your sources.

- 1 Which kinds of jobs are most in demand?
- 2 Which kinds of jobs are easiest for employers to fill? Which are the most difficult?
- 3 Is there a skills gap? If so, explain the gap.
- 4 If there is a skills gap, what kind of training would address this gap?
- 5 What are the job prospects for university graduates? Do most of them get jobs in their fields?





EVALUATE

- 4 Gather some statistics on employment in your country or region. Keep a record of your sources.
 - 1 What is the average participation rate in the labour market? Has this changed in recent years?
 - 2 What percentage of young people go to university?
 - 3 What is the unemployment rate? If possible, find out if there are different rates for people with different levels of education. Has this rate changed?
 - 4 What are average salaries for university graduates? For those without a university education? Have these figures changed?
- 5 Imagine you are a careers adviser and some students have asked you to advise them about which job they should do in the future. Choose one of the top five jobs, and identify the key reasons why they should choose this job. Compare your advice with a partner's and discuss how the two sets of advice differ and why.

GRAMMAR FOR WRITING

ACTIVE VS. PASSIVE VOICE TO DISCUSS FIGURES

Within an academic text, supporting images and graphical elements (graphs, tables, diagrams) are usually all referred to as *figures*.

When writers discuss figures, they use specific words and phrases, sometimes in the passive voice.

To introduce an idea by discussing a figure, the active voice is usually preferred.

Every year, the news magazine US News and World Report publishes a report about the year's 100 best jobs. Figure 5 shows how the report's authors measured job quality.

If you have already introduced an idea and wish to explore it in more detail using a figure, the passive is a useful way to avoid repetition.

Judgment of job quality has several components. These are illustrated in Figure 5.

These verbs are frequently used when discussing figures:

<i>demonstrate</i>	<i>display</i>	<i>illustrate</i>	<i>reveal</i>
<i>depict</i>	<i>list</i>	<i>indicate</i>	<i>show</i>

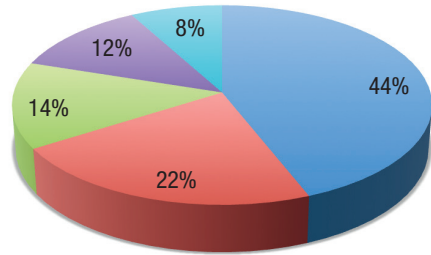
Last year's employment rate, as depicted in the figures on the slide, was lower than average.

Students who graduated with scientific degrees had a higher starting salary, as demonstrated in Figure 2.

- 1 Work with a partner. Match the figures (A–D) to their descriptions below (1–4). Write A, B, C or D.

A *Figure A. Reasons for the skills gap*

Which of the following do you feel best defines the US skills gap?

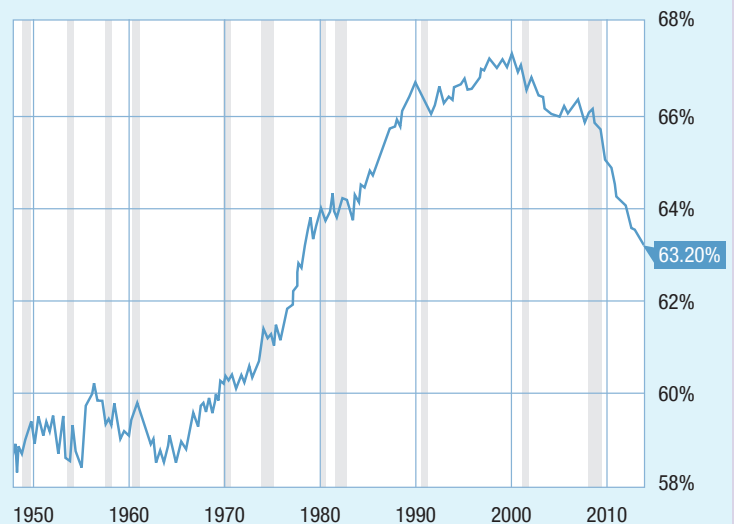


- Lack of soft skills (i.e. communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration)
- Lack of technical skills
- Lack of strong leadership skills
- Lack of computer based technology skills
- N/A – I do not think there is a skills gap in the US workforce

Adecco

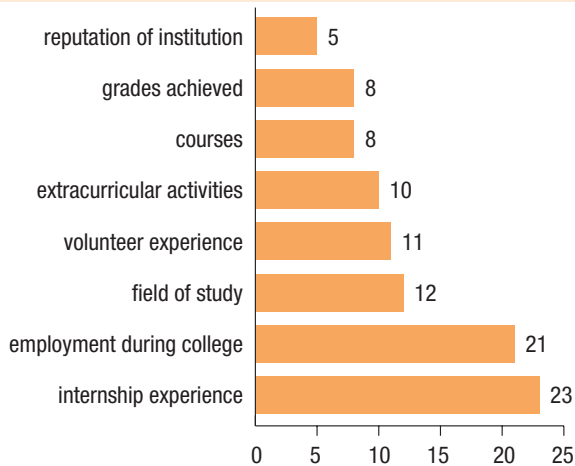
Source: Adecco 2013

B *Figure B. US labour force participation*



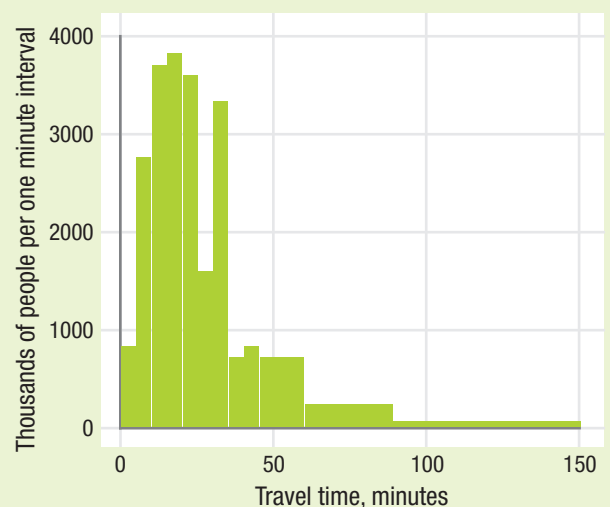
Source: Washington Post / Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013

C *Figure C. How employers weigh factors when they evaluate graduates on a scale of 1–25*



Source: Chronical of Higher Education 2012

D *Figure D. Usual time of daily commute to work*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

- 1 A *line graph* usually shows change over time. _____
- 2 A *pie chart* shows the proportion that each category in the chart represents, usually as percentages of a whole. _____
- 3 A *histogram* displays frequency data, usually in columns, with the y-axis as the counter. _____
- 4 A *bar graph* compares the amounts or frequency of categories that are not part of a whole. _____



2 Match the figures in Exercise 1 (A–D) to the sentence which best expresses the content (1–4). Write *A*, *B*, *C* or *D*. Notice the words in bold.

- 1 Employer preference for experience over academic preparation is **clearly indicated** by Figure _____.
- 2 Figure _____ **depicts** the steep rise in labour force participation during the final quarter of the twentieth century.
- 3 The length of time employees spend going to and from work is **shown** in Figure _____.
- 4 Figure _____ **illustrates** the views of 500 major employers regarding the reasons for the skills gap.

3 Complete the sentences below with either passive or active verbs.

- 1 The table on p. 111 _____ the results of our employer survey on the skills gap.
- 2 The dramatic increase in specialized IT training courses over the past ten years _____ in Fig. 1.
- 3 The figure on the left _____ the various sectors in our market in 1980 and the one on the right _____ our market today.
- 4 You can see this steady growth in the graph on this slide, which _____ the nation's labour participation since 2000.
- 5 The jobs with the highest salaries last year _____ in the accompanying table.

4 For each of the figures in Reading 1 and Reading 2, write one sentence that summarizes the information and one sentence that introduces the material in the graph. You may write them in either order. Pay attention to passive and active voice. Compare your sentences with a partner.

Figure 1 (page 140): _____

Figure 2 (page 141): _____

Figure 1 (page 145): _____

Figure 2 (page 145): _____

MAKING A CLAIM

SKILLS

In an argumentative essay, a writer makes a claim and then provides support for that claim. The claim is delivered in the thesis statement. So the claim is the writer's argument and the thesis statement is the way that argument is expressed in words.

An effective thesis statement does several things:

- It gives readers an idea of what the paper will be about, but it does *not* list every supporting idea that will be offered.
- It narrows down a broader topic so that the writer can fully explore it in an essay.
- It helps readers understand and interpret information about the topic.
- It presents a claim that the readers could argue with. For this reason, facts do not make effective claims.

The thesis statement will generally appear in the first paragraph of an essay. Usually it is expressed in a single sentence, but a complex claim may require two sentences.

To check if you have written an effective thesis statement, ask yourself these questions:

- Does my thesis statement make a claim that my readers can have an opinion about?
- Does it give readers an idea of what my paper will be about without listing every point?
- Is the claim specific enough to be effectively supported in a short essay?

- 1 Choose the best thesis statement for an essay about the skills gap in the labour market.
 - a The skills gap is an economic problem that has developed over several decades.
 - b Addressing the skills gap will require significant changes in the education system and the participation of the business community.
 - c The skills gap is a consequence of the changing economy.
 - d We understand the causes of the skills gap; now it is time to find a way to end it.
 - e The skills gap has developed because the job market changed, schools are not providing training in technical areas and businesses have not communicated their needs to educational leaders.
- 2 Work with a partner. Review the thesis statements in Exercise 1. For each one, answer the following questions.
 - 1 Does the statement make a claim? If so, what is it?
 - 2 Is the claim something readers could have an opinion about?
 - 3 Is the claim specific enough to be developed in a short essay?
 - 4 Are there other reasons the sentence is not an effective thesis statement?



WRITING TASK

Considering the job market in your country, what is a good choice for a career path with a secure future?

PLAN

- 1 Review your research results and the career path you chose in Critical thinking, Exercises 3–5 on pages 149–150. Make notes in the table below. Now reread the two articles in this unit and note any information which is relevant to your essay in the table.

introduction and claim	
body points	

- 2 Work with a partner. Discuss the considerations you are basing your claim on. Think about each factor below. Add notes to your table in Exercise 1.
 - form of education needed (university, vocational training, secondary education)
 - if university is needed, field of study
 - salary potential
 - market demand – which positions are in demand now and will continue to be in demand in the future
 - job satisfaction factors

3 Write a thesis statement for your essay.

4 Organize the body paragraphs of your essay.

- 1 Highlight the notes in your table that support your claim.
- 2 Organize the notes into groups around themes or topics by numbering, circling or highlighting them in different colours. Topics might include:
 - current and future trends in the labour market
 - salary potential
 - educational requirements
 - work–life balance
- 3 Choose two or three topics to write about in your essay. Decide on the order of your topics. Write a topic sentence for each of your body paragraphs.

First body paragraph: _____

Second body paragraph: _____

Third body paragraph: _____

- 4 Create a figure, based on the statistics you have gathered, to help explain a supporting point in one of your body paragraphs or find one that already exists. Include the source of your information. Write a sentence that explains what your chosen figure shows.

5 Think about your conclusion. What thoughts do you want to leave your readers with?

6 Refer to the Task checklist on page 156 as you prepare your essay.

WRITE A FIRST DRAFT

7 Write your essay. Use your essay plan to help you structure your ideas. Write 450–500 words.

REVISE

8 Use the Task checklist to review your essay for content and structure.

TASK CHECKLIST	✓
Have you introduced and explained your topic?	
Does your thesis statement make a claim that people could argue about?	
Have you paraphrased the information in the articles?	
Do your body paragraphs have topic sentences?	
Do your body paragraphs support your claim?	
Have you included a figure to support at least one of the points in your essay?	
Have you explained the figure and said why it is important?	
Does your concluding paragraph leave your readers with something to think about?	

EDIT

9 Use the Language checklist to edit your essay for language errors.

LANGUAGE CHECKLIST	✓
Have you used compound nouns correctly in your essay?	
Did you use appropriate verbs to introduce information from graphics?	
Did you use active and passive voice correctly to introduce or refer to information shown in graphics?	
Did you give your graphics a figure number and title? Did you cite the source below them?	

10 Make any necessary changes to your essay.

OBJECTIVES REVIEW

- 1 Check your learning objectives for this unit. Write 3, 2 or 1 for each objective.

3 = very well 2 = well 1 = not so well

I can ...

watch and understand a video about vocational training. _____

interpret graphical information. _____

analyze information in graphs and other figures. _____

use the active and passive voice to discuss figures. _____

make a claim. _____

write an argumentative essay with graphical support. _____

- 2 Go to the *Unlock Online Workbook* for more practice with this unit's learning objectives.



WORDLIST

ambiguity (n)

assert (v)

assertive (adj)

chronic (adj)

comprise (v)

dispute (v)

earning power (n)

entry level (n, adj)

expertise (n)

founder (n)

illustration (n)

job market (n)

labour (n)

labour force (n)

mismatch (n)

multiple (adj)

persistent (adj)

placement rate (n)

pose (v)

prospective (adj)

training scheme (n)

work life balance (n phr)

The words which are noted with a are among the most frequent words in the Cambridge Academic Corpus.